

Ang. Then must your brother die.
Isa. And 'twere the cheaper way:
 Better it were a brother dide at once,
 Then that a sister, by redeeming him
 Should die for ever.

Ang. Were not you then as cruell as the Sentence,
 That you haue slander'd so?
Isa. Ignomic in ranfome, and free pardon
 Are of two houses: lawfull mercie,
 Is nothing kin to fowle redemption.

Ang. You seem'd of late to make the Law a tyrant,
 And rather prou'd the sliding of your brother
 A merriement, then a vice.

Isa. Oh pardon me my Lord, it oft fals out
 To haue, what we would haue,
 We speake not what we meane;
 I something do excuse the thing I hate,
 For his aduantage that I dearly loue.

Ang. We are all fraile.
Isa. Else let my brother die;
 If not a fedarie but onely he
 Owe, and succeed thy weaknesse.

Ang. Nay, women are fraile too.
Isa. I, as the glasses where they view themselves,
 Which are as easie broke as they make formes;
 Women? Helpe heauen; men their creation marre
 In profiting by them: Nay, call vs ten times fraile,
 For we are lost, as our complexions are,
 And credulous to false prints.

Ang. I thinke it well:
 And from this testimonie of your owne sex
 (Since I suppose we are made to be no stronger
 Then faults may shake our frames) let me be bold;
 I do arrest your words. Bethat you are,
 That is a woman; if you be more, you're none.

If you be one (as you are well exprest
 By all externall warrants) shew it now,
 By putting on the destin'd Luerie.

Isa. I haue no tongue but one; gentle my Lord,
 Let me entreate you speake the former language.

Ang. Plainlie conceiue I loue you.

Isa. My brother did loue *Isabell*.

And you tell me that he shall die for't.

Ang. He shall not *Isabell* if you giue me loue.

Isa. I know your vertue hath a licence in't,
 Which seemes a little fouler then it is,
 To plucke on others.

Ang. Beleeue me on mine Honor,
 My words expresse my purpose.

Isa. Ha? Little honor, to be much beleu'd,
 And most peraitious purpose: Seeming, seeming.

I will proclaime thee *Angelo*, looke for't:
 Signe me a present pardon for my brother,
 Or with an out-stretcht throte Ile tell the world aloud
 What man thou art.

Ang. Who will beleeue thee *Isabell*?
 My vnfold name, th'aufterrenesse of my life,
 My vouch against you, and my place in State,
 Will so your accusation ouer-weigh,
 That you shall stifle in your owne report,
 And smell of calumnie. I haue begun,
 And now I giue my sensuall race, the reine;

Fit thy consent to my sharpe appetite,
 Lay by all nicetie, and prolixious blushes
 That banish what they lue for: Redeeme thy brother,
 By yeelding vp thy bodie to my will,

Or else he must not onely die the death,
 But thy vnkindnesse shall his death draw out
 To lingring sufferance: Answer me to morrow,
 Or by the affection that now guides me most,
 Ile proue a Tirant to him. As for you,
 Say what you can; my false, ore-weighs your true.

Isa. To whom should I complaine? Did I tell this,
 Who would beleeue me? O perillous mouthes
 That beare in them, one and the selfsame tongue,
 Either of condemnation, or approofe,
 Bidding the Law make curstie to their will,
 Hooking both right and wrong to th'appetite,
 To follow as it drawes. Ile to my brother,
 Though he hath false by prompture of the blood,
 Yet hath he in him such a minde of Honor,
 That had he twentie heads to tender downe
 On twentie bloodie blockes, hee'd yeeld them vp,
 Before his sister should her bodie steepe
 To such abhor'd pollution.

Then *Isabell* liue chaste, and brother die;
 "More then our Brother, is our Chastitie.
 Ile tell him yet of *Angelo*'s request,
 And fit his minde to death, for his soules rest.

Actus Tertius. Scena Prima.

Enter Duke, Claudio, and Pronost.

Du. So then you hope of pardon from Lord *Angelo*?
Cla. The miserable haue no other medicine
 But onely hope: I haue hope to liue, and am prepar'd to die.

Duke. Be absolute for death: either death or life
 Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life:
 If I do loose thee, I do loose a thing
 That none but foolles would keepe: a breath thou art,
 Seruile to all the skye-influences,
 That dost this habitation where thou keepst
 Houely afflit: Meerely, thou art death's foole,
 For him thou labourst by thy flight to shun,
 And yet runst toward him still. Thou art not noble,
 For all th'accommodations that thou bearest,
 Are nurst by basenesse: Thou'rt by no meanes valiant,
 For thou dost feare the soft and tender forke
 Of a poore worme: thy best of rest is sleepe,
 And that thou oft prouoakst, yet grosliclie fearst
 Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thy selfe,
 For thou exists on manie a thousand graines
 That issue out of dust. Happie thou art not,
 For what thou hast not, still thou striu'st to get,
 And what thou hast forgetst. Thou art not certaine,
 For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,
 After the Moone: If thou art rich, thou'rt poore,
 For like an Ass, whose backe with Ingots bowes;
 Thou bearest thy heauie riches but a iournie,
 And death vnloads thee; Friend hast thou none,
 For thine owne bowels which do call thee, fire
 The meere effusion of thy proper loines
 Do curse the Gowne, Sapego, and the Rheume
 For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth, nor age
 But as it were an after-dinner sleepe
 Dreaming on both, for all thy blessed youth
 Becomes as aged, and doth begge the almes
 Of palsied-Eld: and when thou art old, and rich
 Thou

Thou hast neither heate, affection, limbe, nor beautie
 To make thy riches pleasant: what's yet in this
 That beares the name of life? Yet in this life
 Lie hid moe thousand deaths; yet death we feare
 That makes these oddes, all euen.

Cla. I humblye thanke you.
 To sue to liue, I finde I seeke to die,
 And seeking death, finde life: Let it come on.

Enter *Isabella*.

Isa. What hoa? Peace heere; Grace, and good com-
 panie.

Pro. Who's there? Come in, the wish deserues a
 welcome.

Duke. Deere sir, ere long Ile visit you againe.

Cla. Most holie Sir, I thanke you.

Isa. My businesse is a word or two with *Claudio*.

Pro. And verie welcom: looke Signior, here's your
 sister.

Duke. Prouost, a word with you.
Pro. As manie as you please.

Duke. Bring them to heare me speake, where I may be
 conceal'd.

Cla. Now sister, what's the comfort?

Isa. Why,

As all comforts are: most good, most good indeede,
 Lord *Angelo* hauing affaires to heauen
 Intends you for his swift Ambassador,
 Where you shall be an euerlasting Leiger;
 Therefore your best appointment make with speed,
 To Morrow you set on.

Cla. Is there no remedie?

Isa. None; but such remedie, as to saue a head
 To cleaue a heart in twaine:

Cla. But is there anie?

Isa. Yes brother, you may liue;
 There is a diuellish mercie in the Iudge,
 If you'll implore it, that will free your life,
 But fetter you till death.

Cla. Perpetuall durance?

Isa. Iust, perpetuall durance, a restraint
 Through all the worlds vastitie you had
 To a determin'd scope.

Cla. But in what nature?

Isa. In such a one, as you consenting too't,
 Would barke your honor from that trunk you beare,
 And leaue you naked.

Cla. Let me know the point.

Isa. Oh, I do feare thee *Claudio*, and I quake,
 Least thou a feauorous life shouldst entertaine,
 And six or seuen winters more respect
 Then a perpetuall Honor. Dar'st thou die?

The fence of death is most in apprehension,
 And the poore Beetle that we treade vpon
 In corporall sufferance, finds a pang as great,
 As when a Giant dies.

Cla. Why giue you me this shame?

Thinke you I can a resolution fetch
 From flowrie tenderesse? If I must die,
 I will encounter darknesse as a bride,
 And hugge it in mine armes.

Isa. There spake my brother: there my fathers graue
 Did vtter forth a voice. Yes, thou must die:
 Thou art too noble, to conferre a life
 In base appliances. This outward fainted Deputie,
 Whose fetted visage, and deliberate word
 Nips youth in't head, and follies doth emmew

As Falcon doth the Fowle, is yet a diuell:
 His filth within being cast, he would appeare
 A pond, as deepe as hell.

Cla. The prenzie, *Angelo*?

Isa. Oh 'tis the cunning Luerie of hell,
 The damnest bodie to inuest, and couer
 In prenzie gardes; dost thou thinke *Claudio*,
 If I would yeeld him my virginities
 Thou might'st be freed?

Cla. Oh heauens, it cannot be.

Isa. Yes, he would giu't thee; from this rank offence
 So to offend him still. This night's the time
 That I should do what I abhorre to name,
 Or else thou diest to morrow.

Cla. Thou shalt not do't.

Isa. O, were it but my life,
 I'de throw it downe for your deliuerance
 As frankly as a pin.

Cla. Thanks deere *Isabell*.

Isa. Be readie *Claudio*, for your death to morrow.

Cla. Yes, Has he affections in him,
 That thus can make him bite the Law by th'nose,
 When he would force it? Sure it is no sinne,
 Or of the deadly seuen it is the least.

Isa. Which is the least?

Cla. If it were damnable, he being so wise,
 Why would he for the momentarie trickie
 Be perdurable fin'de? Oh *Isabell*!

Isa. What saies my brother?

Cla. Death is a fearefull thing.

Isa. And shamed life, a hatefull.

Cla. I, but to die, and go we know not where,
 To lie in cold obstruccion, and to rot,
 This sensible warme motion, to become
 A kneaded clod; And the delighted spirit
 To bath in fierie floods, or to recide
 In thrilling Region of thicke-ribbed Ice,
 To be imprison'd in the viewlesse windes
 And blowne with restless violence round about
 The pendant world: or to be worse then worst
 Of those, that lawlesse and incertaine thought,
 Imagine howling, 'tis too horrible.
 The weariest, and most loathed worldly life
 That Age, Ache, periury, and imprisonment
 Can lay on nature, is a Paradise
 To what we feare of death.

Isa. Alas, alas.

Cla. Sweet Sister, let me liue.

What sinne you do, to saue a brothers life,
 Nature dispenses with the deede so farre,
 That it becomes a vertue.

Isa. Oh you beast,

Oh faithlesse Coward, oh dishonest wretch,
 Wilt thou be made a man, out of my vice?
 Is't not a kinde of Incest, to take life
 From thine owne sisters shame? What should I thinke,
 Heauen shield my Mother plaid my Father faire:
 For such a warped slip of wildernesse
 Nere issu'd from his blood. Take my defiance,
 Die, perish: Might but my bending downe
 Repreue thee from thy fate, it should proceede.
 Ile pray a thousand praiers for thy death,
 No word to saue thee.

Cla. Nay heare me *Isabell*.

Isa. Oh fie, fie, fie:

Thy sinne's not accidentall, but a Trade;

Mercie